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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 6 February 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the continuing deterioration of the situation in the Occupied State of Palestine owing to the illegal, provocative policies that continue to be pursued by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people and their land.

Despite the fact that fragile peace talks are under way, Israel continues to carry out grave violations of international law, ranging from military raids into Palestinian villages and towns, daily arrests and detentions and the injury of Palestinian civilians. At the same time, the occupying Power persists with its massive colonial settlement campaign throughout the Palestinian land, including in and around East Jerusalem. Israel's blatant intransigence is being yet again reaffirmed to Palestine and the international community as a whole, as such actions clearly indicate an Israeli rejection of relinquishing its status of occupying Power, of truly ending the occupation of the Palestinian and Arab lands it occupied in June 1967 and of achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace agreement.

With blatant disrespect for the law and disregard for the clear and repeated international demands for the cessation of all settlement activities, Israel persists with its colonization campaign and its efforts to acquire more Palestinian land by force. In this connection, the Government of the State of Palestine unequivocally condemns Israel's latest approval of the construction of more than 550 settlement units in Occupied East Jerusalem. Yesterday, Wednesday, 5 February 2014, the occupying Power pushed forward with plans to build 386 units in the so-called settlements of "Har Homa", 136 units in "Neve Yaakov" and 36 units in "PisgatZeev". In addition, it has been revealed that the Israeli Ministry of Housing and Construction recently issued tenders for the construction of 208 units in the so-called "Tel Tamar" settlement in the Bethlehem area. Rather than acting to end its four-decade military occupation, Israel is doing the opposite. In grave breach of

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the Fourth Geneva Convention and numerous United Nations resolutions, Israel continues to blatantly entrench its control over the land of the Palestinian people with the deliberate intent of altering the demography and the physical situation on the ground in order to prejudge a final solution. Such illegal and bad-faith actions also undermine the international efforts under way to advance peace negotiations towards achievement of a final solution in 2014.

As well as building settlements, the occupying Power has continued to demolish Palestinian homes, rendering dozens more Palestinian families homeless and forced to suffer the socioeconomic stress and trauma of forced displacement. This includes the most recent demolition of three homes in BeitHanina and Sur Bahir in the Occupied West Bank, which resulted in the displacement of another 25 Palestinians. Also, on 30 January, the occupying forces demolished nearly all structures in a herding community of Ein Al-Hilweh and Um Al Jamal in the Tubas area, forcibly displacing 66 Palestinians, including 36 children. In addition, five Palestinian families in the Silwan neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem were issued demolition orders on 5 February, some of which were set to be implemented within 48 hours. In this regard, we recall that the forced displacement or transfer of civilians by the occupying Power, the destruction of civilian properties and all such acts of collective punishment constitute breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention and must be ceased.

Further provoking and inciting, Israel has continued to carry out violent military raids throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, arresting and detaining dozens more Palestinians, including in the Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Al-Khalil and Qalqilya areas. These raids, typically carried out in the dark or pre-dawn hours, continue to terrorize the civilian population and cause injury to civilians and damage to property as excessive force continues to be used by the occupying forces. In an overnight raid that began at 2 a.m. (Palestine time) on Tuesday, 4 February, individuals in more than 40 Israeli military vehicles stormed the Al-Fara refugee camp in the northern West Bank, ransacking homes, arbitrarily arresting and detaining Palestinian men and boys, causing injury to many as well as spreading fear and panic among the civilians.

The Israeli occupying forces also continue to routinely commit acts of aggression against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, which remains illegally and immorally blockaded by Israel. The most recent military attacks include the shooting and injury of five people on 31 January in BeitLahiya in northern Gaza, which was preceded by Israeli airstrikes that injured seven other Palestinians and airstrikes against Rafah in southern Gaza that injured four Palestinians and caused damage to civilian property in the area.

At the same time, extremist Israeli settlers continue to wreak havoc and terror on the Palestinian people and their lands. On Sunday, 2 February, Israeli settlers from the so-called settlement of "Shilo" violently vandalized private Palestinian agricultural lands in the villages of Sinjil, Turmus Ayya near the Ramallah area in the West Bank and uprooted more than 1,600 olive trees and saplings that were planted three years ago as part of a project funded by the International Committee of the Red Cross. It should be noted that this latest attack was the second of its kind in a week and that such acts of violence, provocation and destruction are being perpetrated by Israeli settlers on a daily basis.

Further aggravating the situation are the provocative statements constantly being made by Israeli officials, including the latest comment made by the Israeli Minister of Housing and Construction, Uri Ariel, who recently declared: "Let me tell you again: there will only be one State from the Mediterranean sea to the Jordan river, Israel." We condemn and reject all such provocations and illegal Israeli actions, which contradict Israel's so-called stated commitment to the two-State solution, revealing instead the true nature and malicious intent of the current Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and which further poison the atmosphere, undermining trust and the peace efforts under way with the support of the entire international community.

Moreover, all of the above-mentioned illegal and provocative actions by Israel and its settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are intensifying hardship among the Palestinian people and worsening conditions on the ground. The international community must firmly reject Israel's empty, offensive pretexts and be resolute in demanding a halt to all illegal practices and demanding Israel's respect for international law and its international commitments. To continue exempting Israel from its legal obligations will only ensure the further deterioration of the situation, taking us farther and farther away from the attainment of a just and lasting solution. The demands for Israeli compliance must be clear and must include demands for an immediate halt to the settlement campaign, which is gravely diminishing the viability of the two-State solution and sabotaging the current peace talks.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 483 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 23 January 2014 (A/ES-10/613-S/2014/47) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dr. Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations